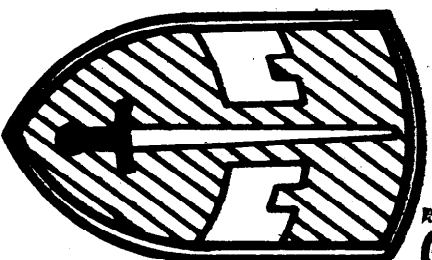


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HEADQUARTERS
UNITED STATES MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND, VIETNAM
APO San Francisco 96243

Serial No. 095
23 January 1965

MACJ 323


SUBJECT: Lessons Learned Number 44: Elimination of Viet Cong Infrastructure (U)

TO: See Distribution

1. (U) Attached as Inclosure 1 is the latest "Lessons Learned" from counterinsurgency operations in the Republic of Vietnam.
2. (U) The information contained in "Lessons Learned" is primarily intended for use by US Advisors in Vietnam. Lessons may be of value for direct application, or they may simply reinforce existing tactics, techniques, or doctrine.
3. (CMHA) Attached document is classified CONFIDENTIAL to permit freedom of expression and careful analysis of operational methods and tactics of the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces, to protect US advisor-counterpart relations and to deny any possible use by insurgent forces. Special handling is required under the applicable provisions of DA-DCMI(A) when released to friendly nations. Release to personnel of the Republic of Vietnam will be governed by the provisions of MACV Directive 380-4, 11 Apr 64. Sanitized versions of this information omitting dates, names of locations and participating personnel and units may be prepared for instructional purposes and/or official US Army, Navy or Air Force publications.
4. (U) Comments, questions and requests for changes in distribution should be addressed to this headquarters, ATTN: J323.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl
as


RICHARD G. STILWELL
Major General, USA
Chief of Staff

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SUBJECT: Lessons Learned Number 44: Elimination of Viet Cong Infrastructure (U)

1. (CMHA) INTRODUCTION: This issue of "Lessons Learned" discusses recent operations conducted in Tu Nghia District, Quang Ngai Province to eliminate the VC infrastructure in that area. Elimination of the VC infrastructure in villages and hamlets is one of the most important requirements for pacification - it is also one of the most difficult tasks to accomplish. Increased civilian unrest as evidenced by demonstrations and disorders the last half of 1964 and recent increases in paramilitary desertions in some parts of the country indicate that the VC are becoming more effective in their attempts to subvert the populace. Therefore, elimination of the VC infrastructure at all levels, hamlet, village and city, is more important than ever. The techniques discussed herein are simple and effective and can be applied wherever similar situations exist.

2. (CMHA) GENERAL: Sector officials and advisors in Quang Ngai Province have developed an operational technique designed to eliminate the VC infrastructure village by village. The first such operation was conducted on 10 October 1964 in Tu Binh Village, Tu Nghia District. Based on the success and experience gained in this operation, it was decided to conduct similar operations in all pacified villages in the district. Since then, two more have been successfully conducted. After these operations have been conducted in all pacified villages of the district, they will be used as a prelude to the introduction of pacification teams into unpacified villages.

3. (CMHA) OPERATIONAL TECHNIQUES: The following is an outline of techniques employed in conjunction with these operations:

a. Two of the main keys to success in any operation are the prior collection of accurate intelligence information and the rapid reaction to new intelligence as the situation develops. Much time and effort has been spent in Tu Nghia District to develop agents, informers and other sources. Currently, each village in the district has two to four secret agents, each of whom employs two to four informants. Agents and informants are native to their areas of surveillance and are known only by the District Police Chief and his assistant. It is a simple matter for agents and informants to maintain close surveillance over the people and their activities since they can easily recognize strangers and VC infiltration or subversive activity. Through these agents, a list of known or suspected VC in the village is compiled and dossiers are maintained.

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b. Once the District Chief has obtained sufficient information, an operation is planned. Because hamlet cadre and Popular Force (PF) members are frequently on the list, the chief must be careful to disseminate the plan only to those who have a need to know. Adjacent villages or districts may provide additional forces to assist in sealing the target village and arrangements are made to arrest any cadre or PF members who are on the suspect list prior to the operation. A typical task organization may consist of:

Two Village PF Platoons
District Special Platoon
Chieu Hoi Platoon
District Police Squad
Province Police Squad
Pacification Team.

c. In execution, forces are moved into place prior to the end of curfew. Security elements or guards are posted at all gates, paths and possible escape routes through the village perimeter fences. PF squads conduct connecting patrols between guard posts. A search team, consisting of a PF platoon with two policemen attached to each squad, is positioned around the inside perimeter fence of the first hamlet to be searched.

d. As soon as there is sufficient daylight, the search team converges slowly on the center of the first hamlet, systematically searching all structures and identifying all persons encountered. Suspects are arrested and contraband is confiscated by the police. As the search begins in the first hamlet, announcements directing the people to remain in their houses are made in all other hamlets of the village. Anyone attempting to leave or enter the village during the search is apprehended by the security personnel and held for questioning.

e. All known VC and VC suspects are taken to a central location for interrogation by the police as they are apprehended. After the entire hamlet has been searched all residents are assembled, a muster is conducted and identity cards are checked. If any resident is found to be unaccountably missing at the muster, his family is told that if he does not return by a specified period of time he will be considered VC. The people are then separated into two groups. Group I consists of people who are pro-GVN; Group II consists of those who are either apathetic or pro-communist. Individuals who have close relatives living in North Vietnam, or who have joined the VC are automatically placed in Group II.

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f. Group I is given a one-day orientation, conducted by Hamlet Cadre, on the policies and objectives of the local and national government. The Chieu Hoi Platoon is given the responsibility of indoctrinating Group II. This group is given a one-day orientation on the ideological comparison of nationalistic versus Viet Cong political movements. At the conclusion of the Group II orientation each individual is directed to write a self-confession and a denunciation of any VC which they know. Individuals are released from the group only when the confession and denunciation is completed. Some individuals have been held for several weeks. As rapidly as VC identification is made from these interrogations and denunciations, additional arrests are made. It was found that approximately 50 percent of the arrests of VC infrastructure members in the district resulted from these sources.

g. After Group I receives their orientation, the Pacification Team moves into the village. This team assists and advises on repairing hamlet defenses, training Combat Youth, reorganization of the civil defense system and organizing village/hamlet administration. The team also provides information, propaganda and entertainment. During this period, which usually takes from two to three weeks, the village PF platoons and the district special platoon assist the hamlet residents during the day and provide security at night.

4. (CMHA) RESULTS: The results of three operations of this type are listed below. Operations in Tu Binh and Tu Quang villages were conducted as described above. The operation in Tu Duy Village was conducted in a similar manner, but was on a smaller scale utilizing village resources only.

<u>VILLAGE</u>	<u>TU BINH</u>	<u>TU QUANG</u>	<u>TU DUY</u>
Total Captured	67	75	126
Released After Interrogation	9	40	91
Killed	2	5	4
Sent to Prison	56	30	31
PF Identified as working for VC	2	3	0
Cadre Identified as working for VC	0	1	0
Hiding Places Discovered	3	3	4

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5. (CMHA) LESSONS LEARNED: As a result of operations conducted thus far, the following lessons have been learned:

- a. Intelligence must be detailed prior to conducting an operation of this type.
- b. Captured and suspected VC must be interrogated immediately.
- c. Rapid action must be taken on information gained through interrogation or denunciation.
- d. Village PF platoons augmented by district forces are better qualified to perform the type operation than RF or ARVN units because of their familiarity with the area and the population.
- e. An operation will normally take a minimum of two weeks to effectively eliminate VC infrastructure.
- f. There must be unity of command and close coordination between agencies involved.
- g. Efforts of the pacification team must be completely integrated into the overall plan.
- h. This type operation, conducted successfully, reinforces the will of the people to resist the VC and results in better control by hamlet and village chiefs, more willingness on the part of the people to cooperate in community projects and more respect for local PF platoons.
- i. Missions should be given village/hamlet cadres and family groups during repacification to give them a sense of participation.

6. (CMHA) COMMENT: The above plan is an excellent refinement of a cordon and search operation. In order to insure that maximum results are obtained without losing any favorable relationships already established between the military and civilian population, the following modifications to the plan are recommended:

- a. When the hamlet residents are assembled following the search, each household head should be permitted to remain in front of his individual quarters during the muster. In this way, property rights of each family will be protected and there will be no grounds for VC propaganda claims that GVN authorities use such a muster as an opportunity to steal from the populace.

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b. To prevent the alienation of the population undergoing the search operation, maximum use should be made of psywar teams to explain that the covert activities of the VC infrastructure require drastic action to eliminate them. It should be further emphasized that the identification of the infrastructure will eventually bring about a more secure and productive hamlet and that these operations will not be necessary when the VC agents and sympathizers are eliminated.

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The first of these is the fact that the Chinese government has been unable to establish a stable and effective system of law and order. This is due to a number of factors, including the lack of a strong central authority, the influence of the military, and the widespread corruption. The second factor is the lack of a strong and independent judiciary. The third factor is the lack of a strong and effective system of law enforcement. The fourth factor is the lack of a strong and effective system of legal education. The fifth factor is the lack of a strong and effective system of legal research. The sixth factor is the lack of a strong and effective system of legal practice. The seventh factor is the lack of a strong and effective system of legal scholarship. The eighth factor is the lack of a strong and effective system of legal history. The ninth factor is the lack of a strong and effective system of legal theory. 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